

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

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English Language Proficiency Report
Coordinating Board for Higher Education
December 14, 2017

DESCRIPTION

Missouri universities with graduate programs regularly assign teaching assistantships to international students. Missouri law requires all graduate students who did not receive both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language to be tested for their ability to communicate orally in English in a classroom setting. This board item presents the biennial report on the English language proficiency of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) at Missouri's public institutions of higher education.

Background

Per state statute, all graduate teaching assistants at Missouri public universities who did not receive both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language must be tested for their ability to communicate orally in English in a classroom setting prior to receiving a teaching appointment at a Missouri public institution of higher education. The statute also requires that the institutions provide the Missouri Department of Higher Education (MDHE) with the results of this testing.

The institutions are required to provide data every two years on the total number of GTAs, as well as their native language, the procedures used in selecting the GTAs, and the orientation programs provided for all GTAs. In addition to being tested for their proficiency in English, graduate students who have not previously lived in the United States and who are assigned to teaching positions are expected to receive a cultural orientation prior to assuming teaching responsibilities. Data for this year's report are for AY 2015 and AY 2016.

The MDHE sent a survey to all public four-year institutions asking for the information outlined in Section 170.012, RSMo. In addition to the aforementioned items, the survey asked for information regarding applicable institutional policies as well as possible exceptions granted as allowed by statute (see Attachment A for the survey and the statute). All four-year institutions responded with the required data.

Highlights from the 2015 and 2016 reporting period include:

- Ten public four-year institutions awarded teaching assignments to graduate students in AY 2015 and AY 2016.
- Each campus that employs GTAs has provided evidence to the MDHE that they assess the English language competency of all international graduates students given teaching assignments at the institution. MDHE staff concludes that all institutions are in compliance with the intent of Section 170.012, RSMo, by administering appropriate tests, measurements, and cultural orientation programs to ensure English language proficiency.
- The total number of GTAs at public institutions was 2,760 in 2015 and 2,842 in 2016, up from 2,706 in 2014.
- Among the ten public four-year institutions that employed GTAs, 24.13 percent were nonnative English speakers in AY 2015 and 25.37 percent were nonnative English speakers in AY 2016.
- A majority of the nonnative English-speaking graduate students with teaching assignments are at the University of Missouri's four campuses, which employed 85.5 percent and 87 percent of nonnative GTAs at public institutions in AY 2015 and AY 2016, respectively.

GTA English Language Proficiency Survey Results		AY15	AY16
1.	Number of Teaching Assistant (TA) applicants taking an English Language proficiency test	1,002	965
2.	Number of TA applicants in Question #1 who have utilized any remedial language services that may be available	106	114
3.	Number of TA applicants in Question #1 taking an English Language proficiency test who <u>did not</u> pass	189	168
4.	Number of TA applicants in Question #2 who received a graduate teaching assistantship	53	76
5.	Total number of TAs awarded	2,760	2,842
6.	Number of TAs awarded to students who <u>did not</u> receive <u>both</u> primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language	666	721
7.	Number of TAs in Question #6 who speak certain native languages	See Attachment B	See Attachment B
8.	Number of exceptions granted to TAs in Question #6 to receive a teaching assignment during their first semester of enrollment	19	30
9.	Number of TAs in Question #6 who received a cultural orientation	372	454

Conclusion

Section 170.012, RSMo, does not establish minimum proficiency standards. While all institutions are required to submit biennial reports to the board, the effectiveness of programs for nonnative English speakers with graduate teaching assistantships is monitored at the institutional level. Missouri's public four-year institutions that assign teaching assistantships to nonnative English speakers have met all the statutory requirements.

STATUTORY REFERENCE

Section 170.012, RSMo – Graduate Teaching Assistants Communication in English Language Requirements - Testing and Reports

RECOMMENDED ACTION

This is an information item only.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Institution Survey

Attachment B: Reported Number of Teaching Assistants by Native Language



**Graduate Teaching Assistant
Language Proficiency Questionnaire
2017 Biennial Report**

Institution:

Name and Title of Person Responding:

Contact Information:

Telephone Number:

E-mail:

		AY 2015	AY 2016
1.	Number of Teaching Assistant (TA) applicants taking an English language proficiency test		
2.	Number of TA applicants in Question #1 who utilized any remedial language services that may be available. If no remedial language services are available at your institution, enter N/A		
3.	Number of TA applicants in Question #1 taking an English language proficiency test who <u>did not</u> pass		

4.	Number of TA applicants in Question #2 who received a graduate teaching assistantship														
<i>*In an attachment, please explain why these TAs received a teaching assignment.</i>															
5.	Total number of Teaching Assistantships awarded														
6.	Number of TAs awarded to students who <u>did not</u> receive <u>both</u> primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language														
<i>*In an attachment, please report the number of TAs in question 6, along with their native languages, by academic year.</i> <i>Example:</i> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">LANGUAGE</th> <th style="width: 33%;">2015</th> <th style="width: 33%;">2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Amharic</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Afrikaans</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Arabic</td> <td>3</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				LANGUAGE	2015	2016	Amharic	4	1	Afrikaans	2	5	Arabic	3	7
LANGUAGE	2015	2016													
Amharic	4	1													
Afrikaans	2	5													
Arabic	3	7													
7.	Number of exceptions granted to TAs in Question #6 to receive a teaching assignment during their first semester of enrollment														
<i>*In an attachment, please describe why these TAs received an exception.</i>															
8.	Number of TAs in Question #6 who received a cultural orientation														

Attachments:

Please attach the following documents to your response; you may use web links as available:

- ☐ Circumstances for granting graduate teaching assignments to applicants in Question 4
- ☐ Numbers of graduate teaching assignments, by language, by year
- ☐ Circumstances for granting exceptions to TAs in Question 7
- ☐ Policy for selection of graduate teaching assistants
- ☐ Policy for cultural orientation of graduate teaching assistants who have not previously lived in the United States (attach policy and description of orientation activities)

- ☐ Policy/procedures used to ensure oral language proficiency of graduate teaching assistants who did not receive both primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language (attach policy, test name(s), and cut-off score(s) if applicable)
- ☐ Policy/procedures regarding remedial English language proficiency programs available to graduate teaching assistant applicants (attach policy and description of remedial program(s))

Missouri Revised Statutes
Chapter 170
Instruction--Materials and Subjects
Section 170.012

Graduate teaching assistants communication in English language requirements--testing and reports.

- 170.012. 1. Any graduate student who did not receive both his primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language shall not be given a teaching appointment during his or her first semester of enrollment at any public institution of higher education in the state of Missouri. Exceptions may be granted in special cases upon approval of the chief academic and executive officers of the institution.
2. All graduate students who did not receive both their primary and secondary education in a nation or territory in which English is the primary language shall be tested for their ability to communicate orally in English in a classroom setting prior to receiving a teaching appointment. Such testing shall be made available by the public institution at no cost to the graduate student.
3. All graduate students prior to filling a teaching assistant position as a graduate student, who have not previously lived in the United States shall be given a cultural orientation to prepare them for such teaching appointment.
4. All public institutions of higher education in this state shall provide to the coordinating board for higher education on a biennial basis a report on the number and language background of all teaching assistants, including a copy of the institutions current policy for selection of graduate teaching assistants.
5. The provisions of this section and sections 174.310 and 175.021 shall not apply to any person employed under a contract of employment in existence prior to August 13, 1986.

(L. 1986 S.B. 602 § 2)

**Reported Number of Graduate Teaching Assistants by
Native Language Other than English**

Language	2015	2016
Akan	0	1
Arabic	25	54
Bangla/Bengali	28	32
Burmese	1	1
Belarusian	1	2
Catalan	0	1
Chinese Languages Unspecified	187	201
Creole	1	1
Danish	2	0
English (Non-US)	24	22
Farsi	24	25
French	9	9
Georgian	1	0
German	12	7
Greek	1	1
Gujarati	4	5
Hebrew	0	1
Hindi	45	43
Hungarian	1	1
Igbo/Ibo	2	1
Indian Languages Unspecified	33	39
Indonesian	3	4
Italian	6	4
Japanese	1	1
Kannada	2	6
Kurdish	0	3
Korean	27	31
Lithuanian	0	1
Malay	2	1
Malayalam	3	1
Mandarin	1	0
Mandingo	0	1
Maithili	1	2
Marathi	7	7
Mongolian	0	1
Nepalese	21	13
Odia	0	1
Other (unspecified)	52	44
Oriya	1	1
Polish	0	1
Portuguese	5	8
Punjabi	2	0
Romanian	1	3
Runyoro	0	1
Russian	5	6
Serbian	2	1
Setswana	1	0
Shona	0	1
Sinhalese	10	9
Spanish	26	33

Swahili	4	5
Tajik	1	2
Tamil	10	6
Telugu	40	44
Thai	7	6
Tok Pisin	1	1
Turkish	9	7
Twi	3	2
Ukrainian	4	1
Urdu	4	4
Vietnamese	17	12
Yoruba	5	2
Total	685	724